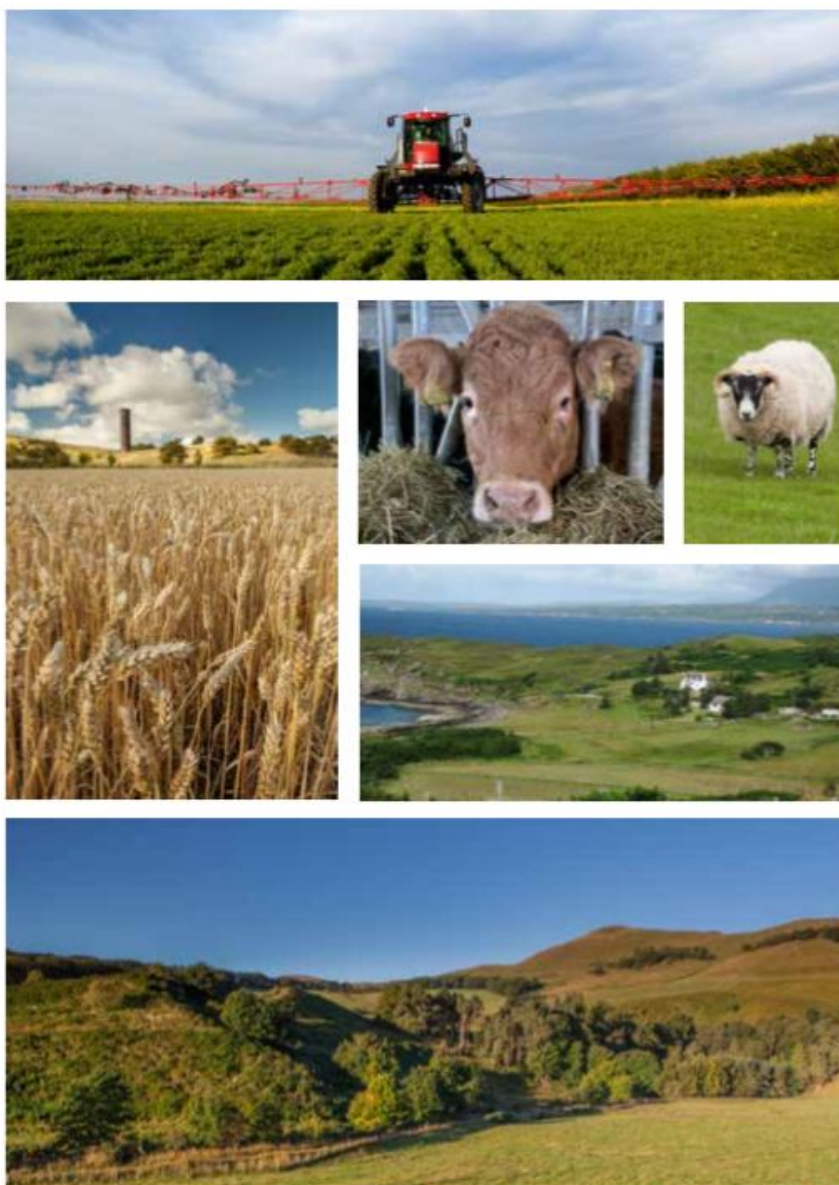


Scottish Farm Advisory Service One-to-Many Programme 2021 Annual Report



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1. Introduction

This document reports on SAC Consulting's delivery of the One-to-Many component of the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2021.

"FAS in five"

1. 167 events delivered to 4,850 farmers, crofters and others involved in Scotland's agricultural community – an average of 29 per event.
2. 96 percent satisfaction with events, with 84 percent of attendees planning to act on the information gained.
3. 1,766,090-page views of the website spread across 475,665 sessions – a substantial increase in both volume and page views per session on the previous period.
4. 220,270 downloads of publications from the website, 172,532 views of videos on Facebook, 244,918 views of videos on YouTube, and 24,810 listens to podcasts. Facebook and YouTube video views are 268% of the equivalent period in 2020.
5. 2,144 crofters and 304 small farmers subscribed to Croft and Small Farm Advisory Service, whilst 1,407 eligible businesses received help from the FAS Advice Line.

2. Vision for the Farm Advisory Service

"Scotland's Farm Advisory Service is a professional, modern advisory service that continues to facilitate step-changes in the economic and environmental performance of farmers and crofters throughout Scotland. It achieves this through provision of advice, collaboration with industry bodies, promotion and communication of the prevailing themes and policies for the relevant year."

3. Outcomes specified in tender

The following outcomes were specified in the FAS one-to-many tender document. They guide the delivery of the service and aim to help achieve the wider priorities of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) as well as supporting the outcomes derived from the Future of Scottish Agriculture initiative:

- Knowledgeable, multi-skilled farmers and crofters capable of delivering business, societal and environmental benefits within a complex legislative and physical operating environment.

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- Greater uptake of agricultural practises that deliver increased economic performance whilst mitigating against climate change and enhancing biodiversity status.
- Increasing numbers of dynamic young people successfully entering Scottish agriculture, thereby injecting vigour in the development of thriving farm and rural businesses.
- Easy access to up-to-date and relevant knowledge and information to all farmers and crofters through a network of advisory centres, on-line resources, and a telephone advice facility.
- Land managers using key national performance metrics (benchmarks).
- Improved uptake of integrated methods of managing plant and animal health, including the safer use of and reduced reliance on pesticides and antibiotics.
- Improved water quality through a reduction in diffuse pollution and run-off.

4. Executive summary

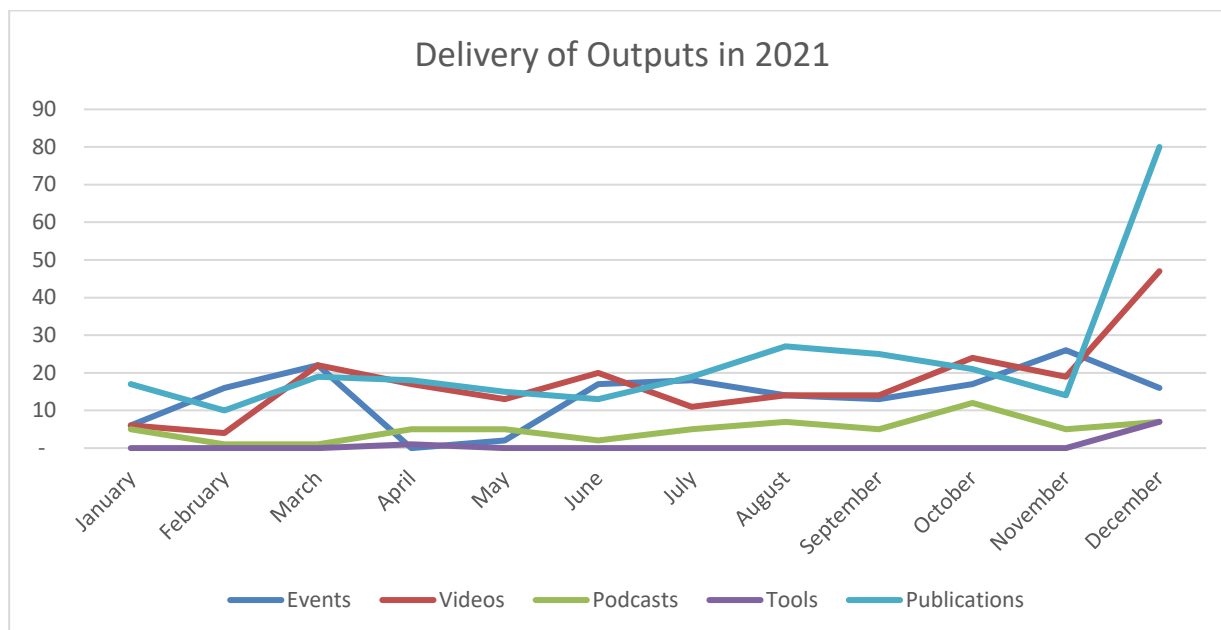
- The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were met or exceeded in 79 percent of reporting periods, and were within 2 percentage points of being met in a further 14 percent of reporting periods.
- 167 events (predominantly online) were run during 2021, with 4,850 attendees and an average attendance of 29. Feedback from participants was exceptionally positive, with 96 percent saying the events were “excellent” or “good”, and 84 percent saying they would implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event.
- 278 publications, 211 videos, 60 podcasts and 8 online tools were produced. The FAS newsletter was published monthly and by the end of the year was being distributed monthly to up to 6,067 people – 696 more than the same time the previous year.
- 1,766,090-page views of the website spread across 30,576 sessions – over 150% of the number in the equivalent period in 2020.
- Twitter followers grew by 20 percent to 2,523, whilst Facebook followers grew by 16 percent to 5,278.
- 2,144 crofters and 304 smallholders subscribed to the Croft and Small Farm Advisory Service.
- There were 1,407 enquiries to the Advice Line where farmers and crofters received up to 30 minutes of free advice.

Target measure	Target	Actual	Number delivered versus target	Percentage delivered versus target
Events	168	167	-1	99%
Event attendees	4,086	4,850	+764	119%
Average attendance	24	29	+5	121%
Publications	241	278	+37	115%
Videos	117	211	+94	180%
Podcasts	60	67	+7	112%

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Online tools	7	8	+1	114%
Crofter and small farm subscribers	2,275	2,448	+173	108%



5. Key performance indicators (KPIs)

The following were the KPIs for delivery of the one-to-many service in 2021:

1. At least 4,086 attendees at 170 events (an average of 24 per event).
2. Attendance exceeds 75 percent of the predicted number.
3. More than 95 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form rate the overall quality of the event as “excellent” or “very satisfactory”.
4. More than 95 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form rate the relevance of the event as “excellent” or “very satisfactory”.
5. More than 80 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form say they will implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event.
6. The bounce rate (the percentage of people visiting the homepage and then leaving without going to another page on the site) is below 50 percent.
7. The website is available for at least 99 percent of the time.
8. 95 percent of call-backs are done within six working hours.

9. 95 percent of routine queries are responded to within one working day.
10. 95 percent of detailed queries are responded to within two working days.
11. 95 percent of complex queries are responded to within five working days.
12. 95 percent of e-mail enquiries are responded to within one working day.

KPI 1 is measured annually and was partially met. 167 events were held, the total attendance was 4,850 and the average attendance was 29. The remaining KPIs are measured and reported on monthly basis. The table overleaf summarises performance across the year.

KPI	Monthly KPI performance 2021 (green = KPI met or exceeded, red = KPI not met, yellow=KPI marginally not met*)												AVERAGE
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
2	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
3	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
4	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
5	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
6	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
7	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
8	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
9	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
10	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
11	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
12	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green

* where a KPI was with 2 percentage points of being met.

The above table highlights that the KPIs 2 to 12 were met or exceeded 70 percent of the time (11 monthly KPIs measured over 12 months), and were almost met a further 19% of the time. Average performance exceeded the target in 9 out of the 11 KPIs.

KPI 4 (relevance) can be challenging when delivering a predominantly online event schedule as there is a lower 'hurdle' to attendance – participants may attend a remote event for 'general interest', whereas attendees at an in-person event are more likely to have investigated the likely relevance before booking.

KPI 5 (influence to change) was seen to reduce when event delivery moved to remote-only, however subsequent investigation points to this being at least in part due to the format of the online evaluation process and since September this KPI has been consistently met.

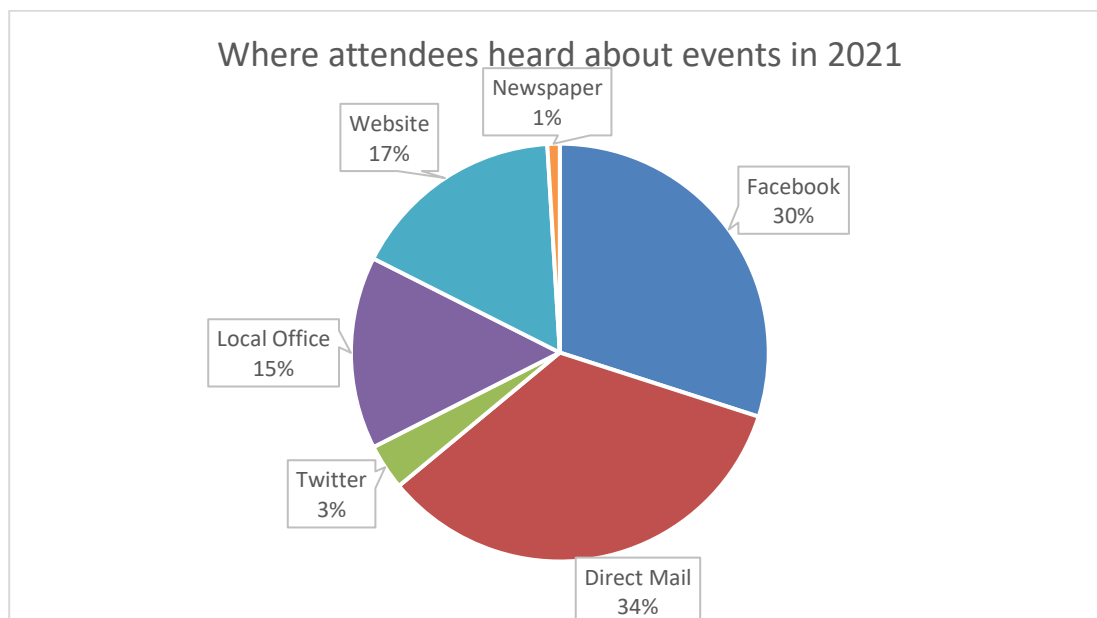
KPI 6 (bounce rate) has historically been marginally less than the target but is seen to have improved with a switch from Google Analytics to Matomo.

KPI 11 (complex queries) appears not to have been met for a significant part of the year, however in most cases because queries have been answered quickly enough but the relevant member(s) of staff have not completed and returned the necessary paperwork to confirm this.

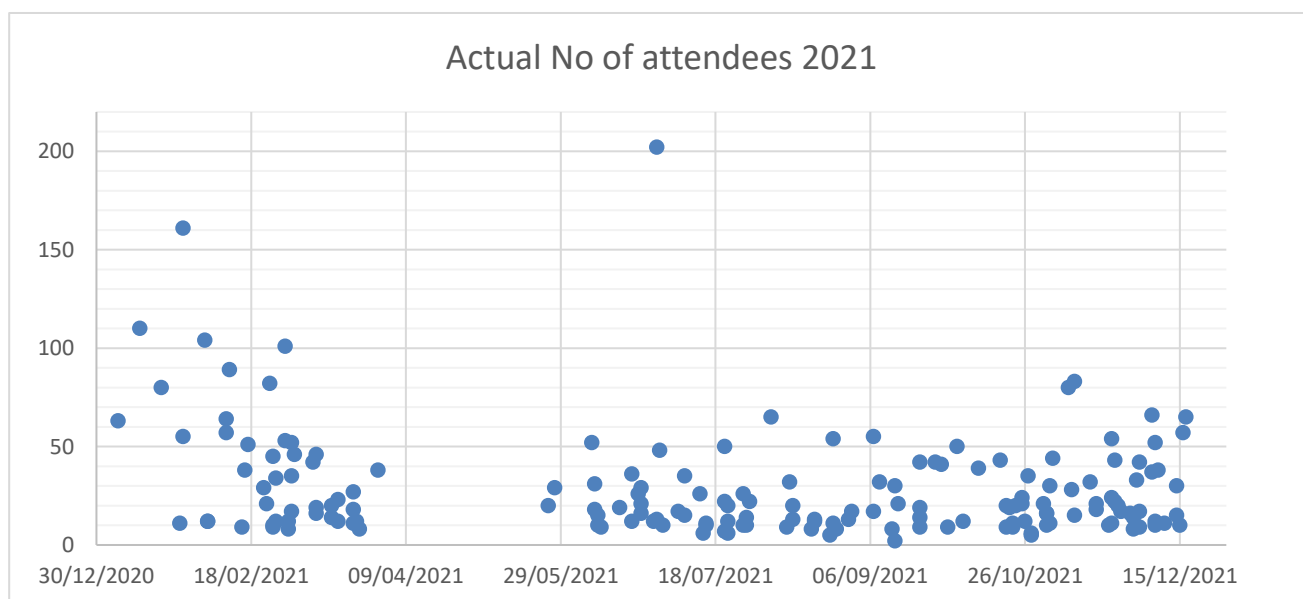
6. Events

Knowledge transfer (KT) events continued to be a very significant element of the delivery in 2021. During the year 167 events were held. The total predicted attendance at the events was 3,616 (an average of 22 per event) and the total actual attendance was 4,850 (an average of 29 per event) – 121 percent of the predicted). 59 percent of events met or exceeded their predicted attendance – up from 57 percent the previous year.

Promotion of events to ensure good awareness, attendances and value for money was an ongoing task. The ways in which attendees said they heard about events was as follows:



The average attendance (29) was excellent and similar to the previous year. With all events being online, there was a low bar to participating in an event i.e., no travel and typically shorter length events. There was a simultaneously a lower bar to withdrawing from an event i.e., booking on and then not taking part. It was also harder, despite initiatives such as a monthly prize draw for completion, to get participants to complete an online evaluation form – leading to a continued low rate of form completion (26%). However digital delivery also enabled the use of speakers from across the world to talk about a range of subjects – all of which were hugely popular and well regarded.



Breeding And Feeding For Sustainable Sheep Systems

 January 27 2021

Book >

 7:30pm - 9:00pm

In this webinar, Dewi Jones, CEO of Innovis, will discuss how they have developed a low cost productive sheep system that achieves high levels of livestock performance from a forage only diet. Dewi will discuss the importance of grassland management and designing a system that suits grass availability, outdoor lambing, low cost wintering systems including forage crops and how they have developed functional performance recorded sheep genetics that thrive on this system.



Organiser: Daniel Stout

Region: Aberdeenshire & Moray, Angus, Argyll & Bute, Ayrshire & Arran, Central, Dumfries & Galloway, Highlands, Lothian & Borders, Orkney, Outer Hebrides, Shetland, Tayside & Fife

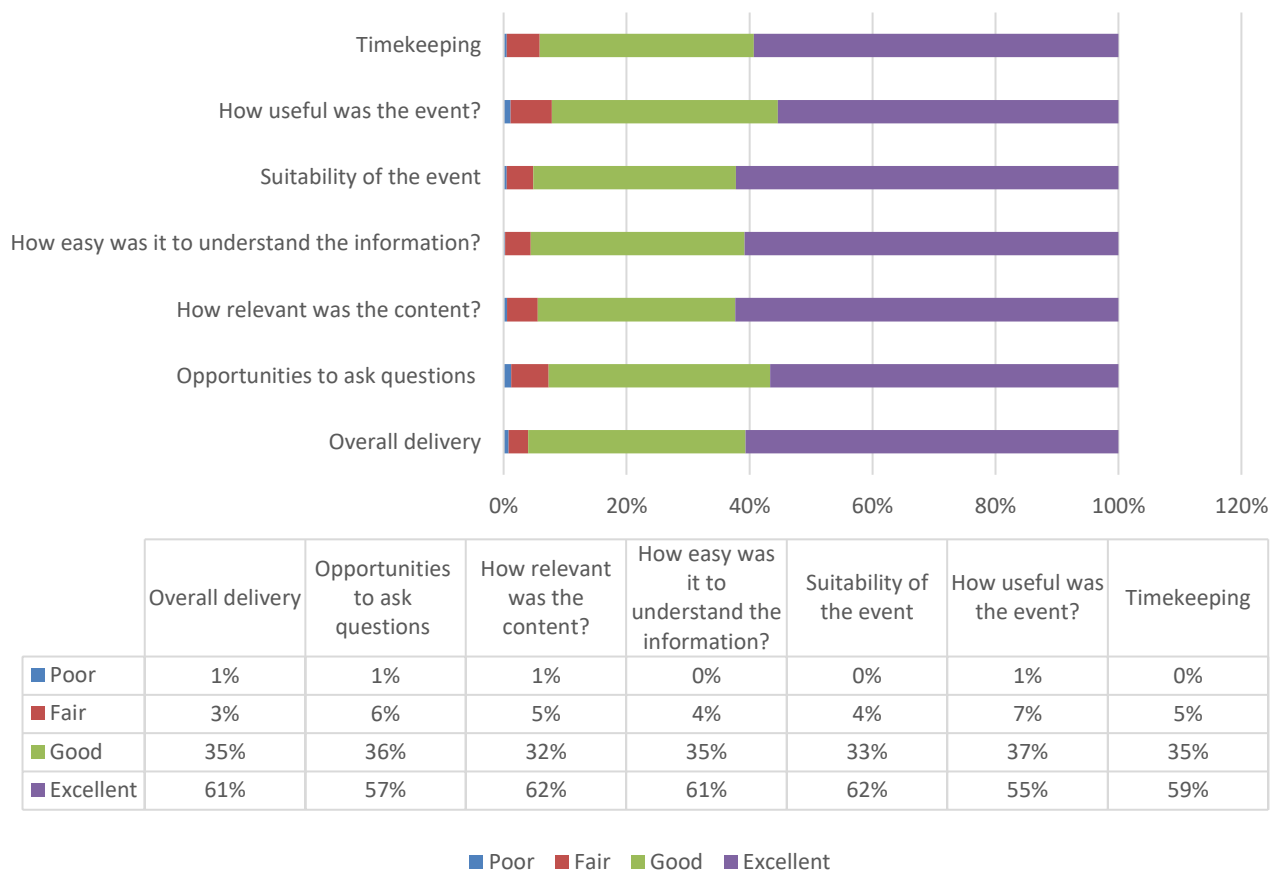
Topic: Livestock

Figure 1 – One of the most popular events of the year, with 155 attendees.

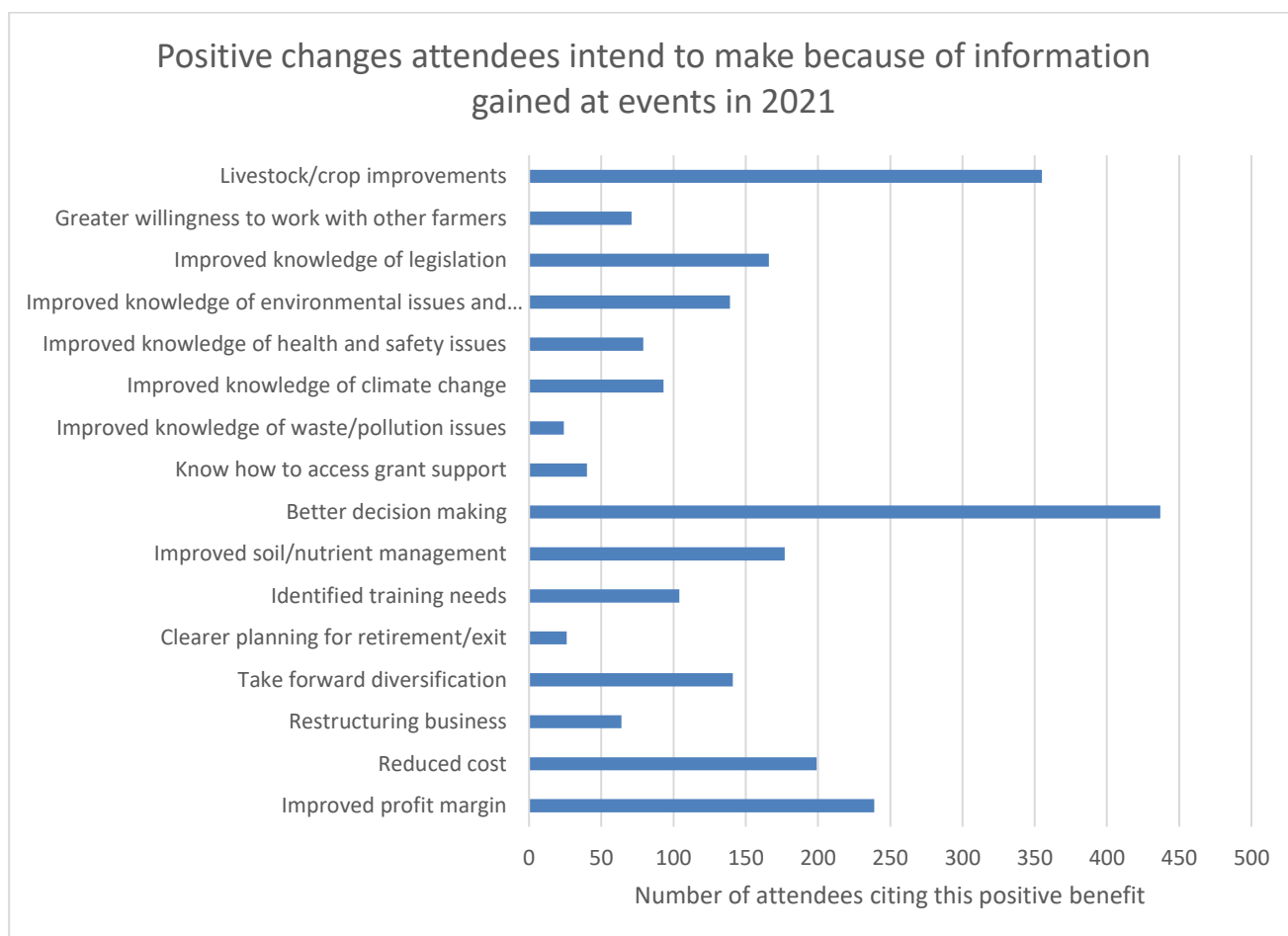
Across 2021, most events were delivered online as webinars or smaller online discussion groups until the summer when a selected number of small groups were allowed to meet on-farm. Delivery reverted to online only during November and December 2021 but it is anticipated that, beginning with smaller on-farm group activities, a greater number of in-person events, will be possible in 2022.

Not only are FAS events largely well attended, they are also very highly regarded by those who attend. All attendees are asked to complete an evaluation form, and across the year 26 percent (1,249) did so. The graph below summarises the results, but the headline message is that those who attend are overwhelmingly very positive in their feedback. 96 percent of responses are “Good” or “Excellent”.

Event Evaluation 2021

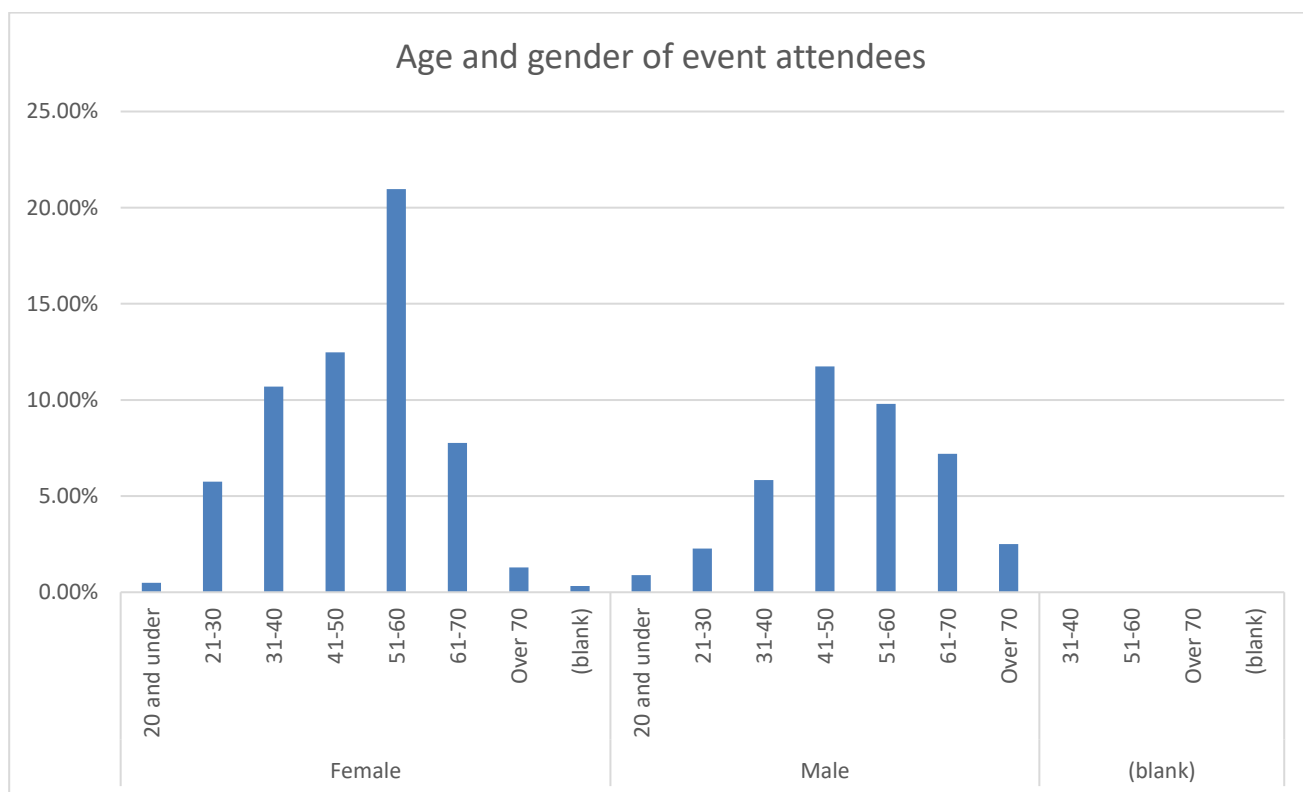


The objective of FAS is to “facilitate step-changes in the economic and environmental performance of farmers and crofters throughout Scotland”. It is therefore important that event attendees do something positive with the information they have gained. It is therefore very positive that of those who answered the question, 84 percent of those who completed an evaluation form indicated at least one change they would make to their farm management because of information gained at the event. The graph below shows the positive changes the attendees thought there were likely to be on their businesses because of the knowledge they had gained at the event.



Sixteen percent (201) of attendees who attended an event did not indicate that they would make any of the above changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event. Of those who provided reasons why, 6 percent said it was because to make the necessary changes would be too expensive, 4 percent said they did not have enough time, 15 percent said they needed more information, 19 percent said they had learned nothing new, and 56 percent said “other”. Whilst it is regrettable that 19 percent of this cohort said they had not learned anything new, it must be borne in mind that it represents only 39 attendees of a total of 4,850.

In 2021 the majority (60 percent) of attendees were female, although this varies greatly between events depending on the topics being covered. The age profile and gender of attendees is diverse and outlined in the graph below.



7. Publications

As the national advisory service covering a diverse agricultural sector, it is not surprising that a wide range and large number of publications were produced in 2021. In total, 278 were produced (115 percent of the planned number) – ranging from large, detailed publications like the Farm Management Handbook and Agribusiness News, to technical notes, through to case studies and advertorials in the farming and mainstream press.

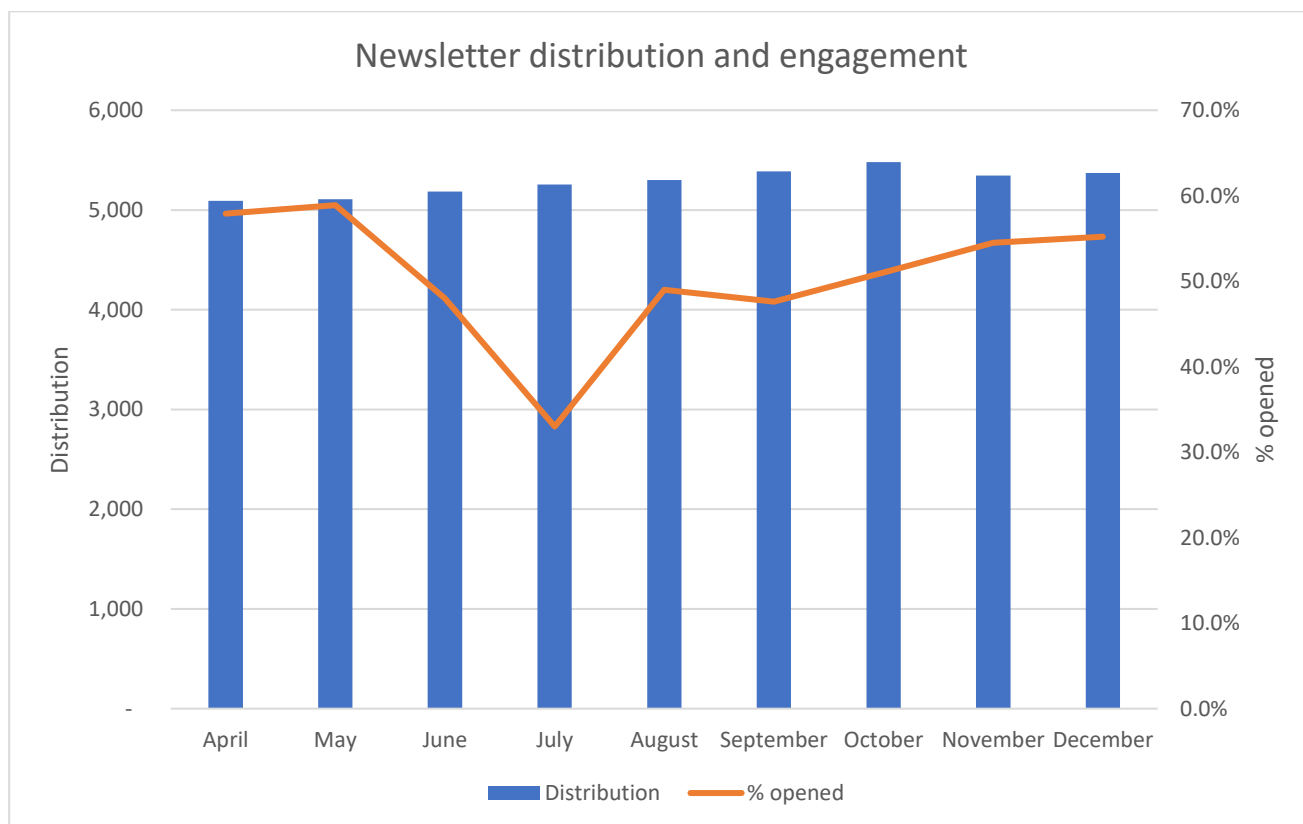
There is a wealth of information on the website – some of it produced in 2021 and some prior to that. During 2021, publications were downloaded more than 220,270 times, an increase on 2020 after adjusting for the difference in reporting period duration. The table below shows the most popular downloads.

	Top 20 downloads	Downloads
1	Farm Management Handbook 2020/21	8,108
2	Beef Cattle Housing	8,005

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	Top 20 downloads	Downloads
3	Farm Management Handbook 2019/20	6,362
4	TN691 Plants Planting Methods	5,518
5	AHDB: Herd fertility benchmarking	4,469
6	One Born Every Minute – Lambing	4,090
7	New Entrants Guide to Buying and Selling at the Mart	3,857
8	TN701 Control of Rushes	3,342
9	TN571: Pneumonia in Beef Cattle	3,266
10	TN689 Cattle Housing Ventilation	3,075
11	TN733: Forage Crops for Livestock	2,961
12	Farm Management Handbook 2018/19	2,757
13	Introduction To Crofting	2,609
14	Farm Management Handbook 2017/18	2,559
15	TN702 Body Condition Scoring Mature Sheep	2,493
16	Lambing three times in two years	2,421
17	TN694 Alternative Forages Sheep Fodder Beet	2,305
18	An Introduction to Benchmarking for Sheep	2,114
19	Rotational Grazing	2,065
20	Understanding cattle and carcasses for better returns	2,063



8. Videos, podcasts, and online tools

In a year when face-to-face engagement became impossible, it is no surprise that videos became an ever more important aspect of the one-to-many programme's output. Building on the experience and engagement of previous years, 142 videos were produced and posted online – on both YouTube and Facebook – during 2021. Engagement with them grew significantly, particularly on YouTube, as shown in the coming pages.

This growth in engagement with videos, and the fact that it overcomes some of the barriers to knowledge transfer imposed by COVID-19 are two of the reasons behind a major new development for the one-to-many programme in Spring 2021. FAS TV is an ambitious project which aims to bring an agricultural programme to our screens via a dedicated YouTube channel. Over the course of 25

episodes, this magazine style show will build on the success of programmes such as “This Farming life” but will be made entirely with farmers and crofters in mind.

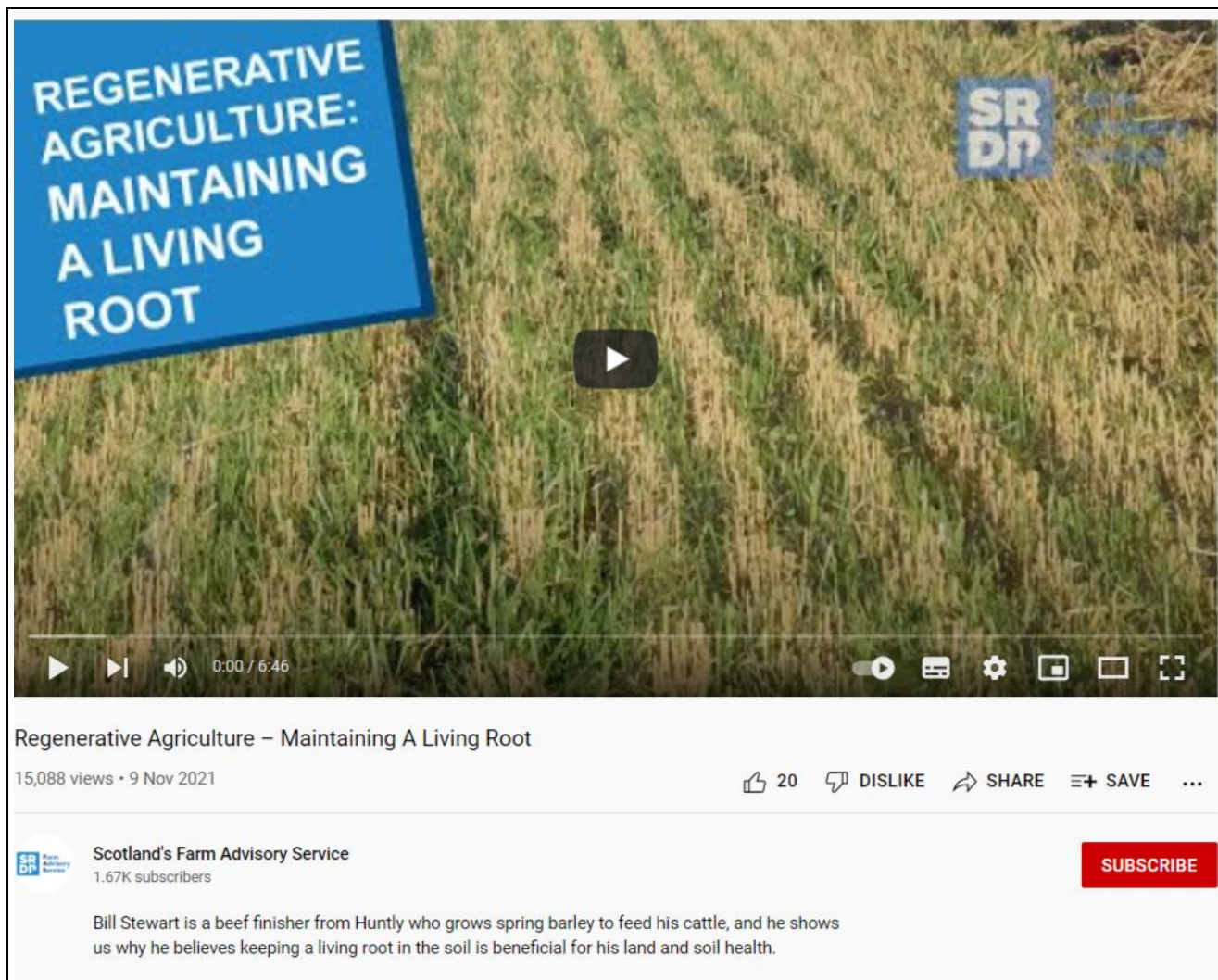


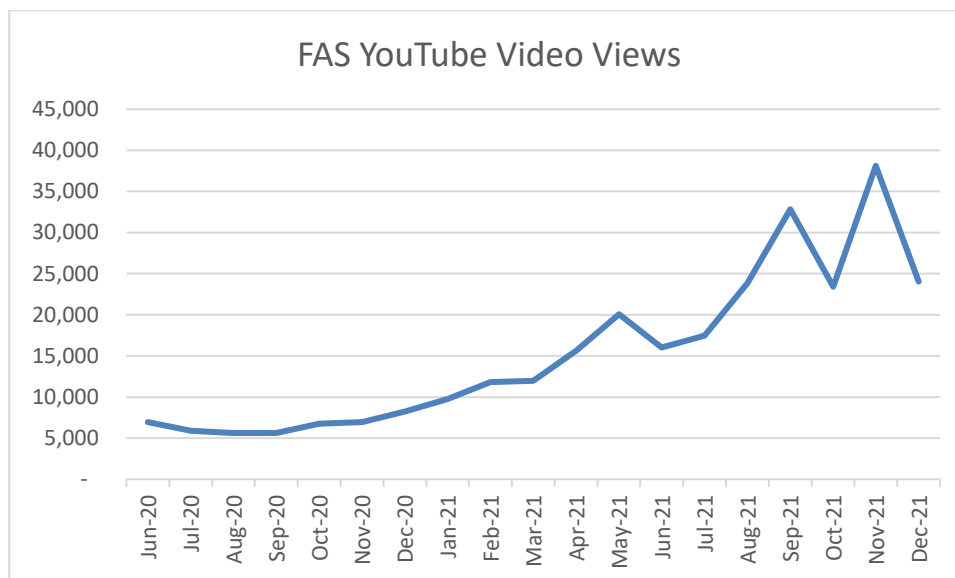
Figure 3 – The top video of 2021, with 14,976 views at 31 December 2021.

The FAS YouTube account has seen significant growth in use and time spent watching videos, as outlined in the table below.

Measure	2021	Monthly	2020	Monthly	2020 vs 2021	2020 vs 2021 (%)
Minutes watched	546,000	45,500	156,000	17,333	+28,167	+163%
Sessions	244,900	20,408	55,481	6,165	+14,243	+231%
Average minutes per session	2:14	N/A	2:46	N/A	-0:32	-19.3%

Top five videos on YouTube 2021 (244,918 views)	Views
Regenerative Agriculture – Maintaining A Living Root	14,976
Controlling rushes on your farm	10,545
FAS TV: Ep18	8,697
FAS TV: Ep 12	7,364
FAS TV: Ep13	6,770

The FAS YouTube channel subscribers currently sit at 1,653, an increase of 1,139 (+221.5%) in 2021. The FAS YouTube channel has seen substantial increases in engagement:



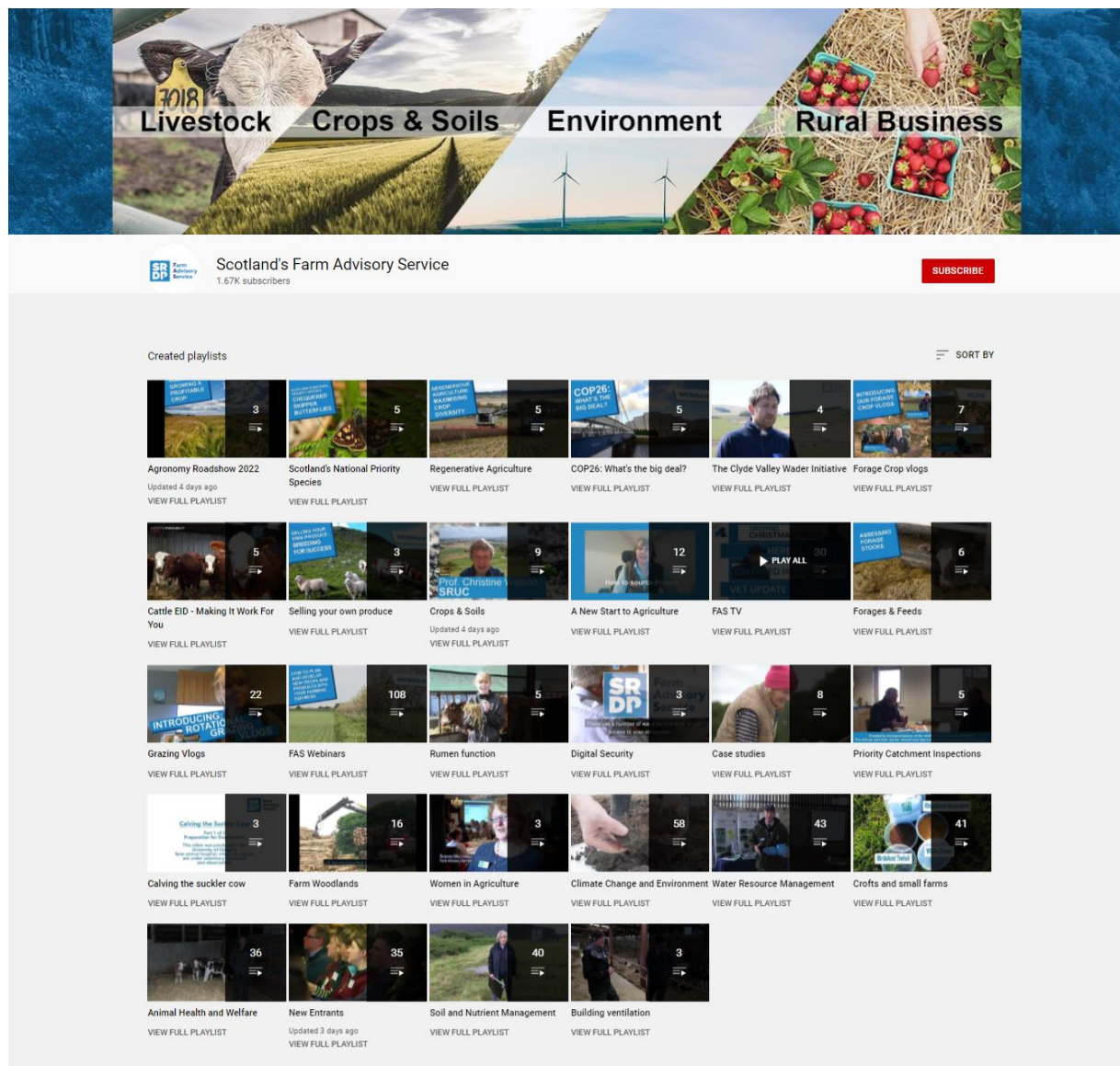
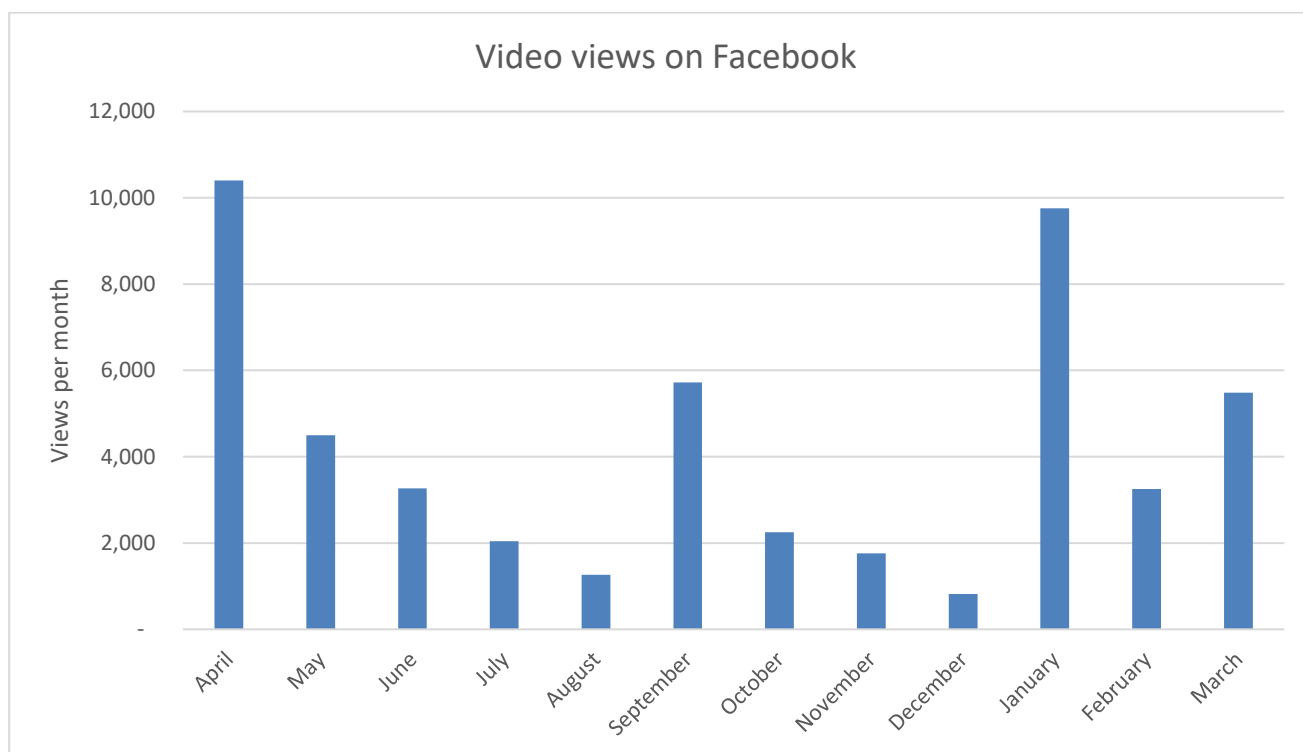


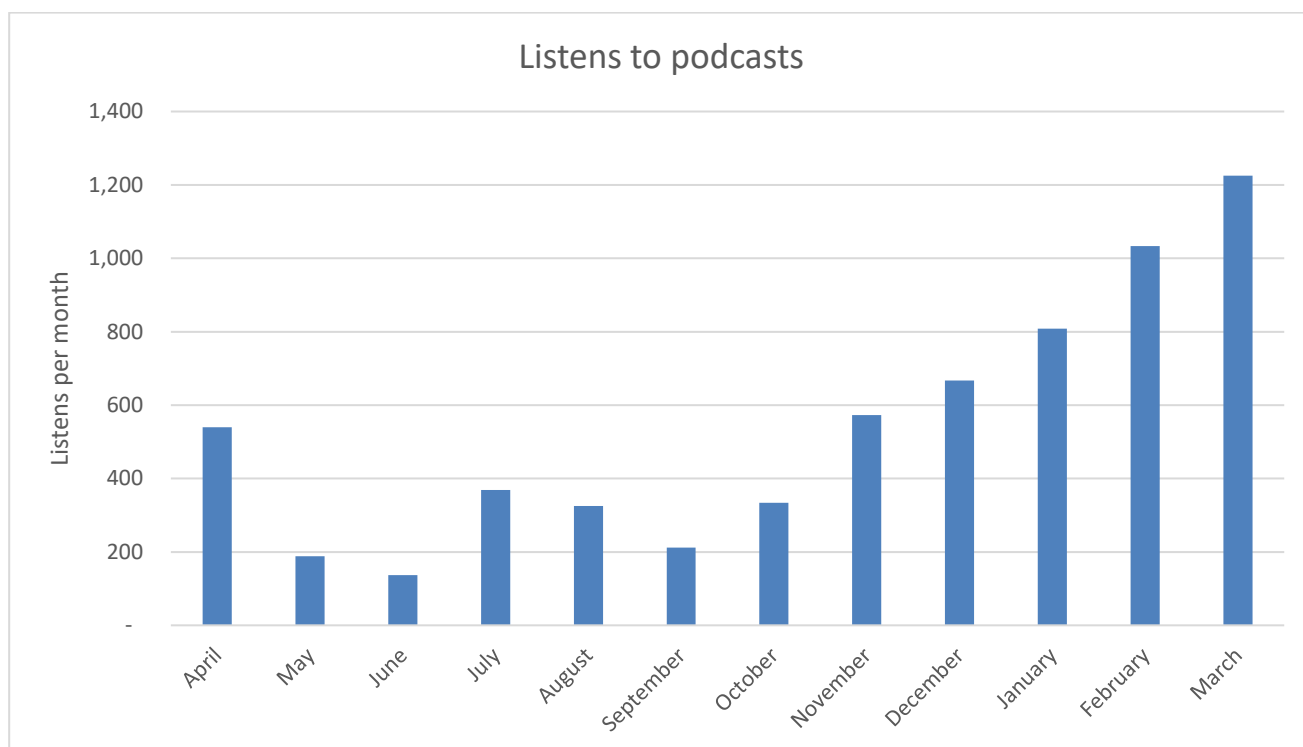
Figure 4 – FAS Videos on YouTube

During the year, FAS videos were viewed 172,532 times on Facebook during the year (up 145% from the previous year).



Top five videos on Facebook 2021 (172,532 views)	Views
FAS TV: Episode 12	15,793
FAS TV: Episode 6	13,236
FAS TV: Episode 1	13,047
FAS TV: Episode 13	10,076
FAS TV: Episode 19	8,405

During 2021, 60 podcasts were produced, covering a wide range of subjects. These were then put online on five podcast streaming services (Apple podcasts, Spotify, Google podcasts, Deezer, and RadioPublic). During the year, all FAS podcasts were listened to a total of 24,810 13,947 (up 78% on the previous year).



Top five podcasts 2021 (24,810 total listens)	Listens
Predator Control For the Conservation of Ground-Nesting Birds	372
Livestock Monthly: Beef (July 2021)	368
Precision solutions to animal health & welfare: episode 1	361
Sustainable Sheep Systems – Getting on top of lameness	356
Livestock Monthly: Sheep (August 2021)	350

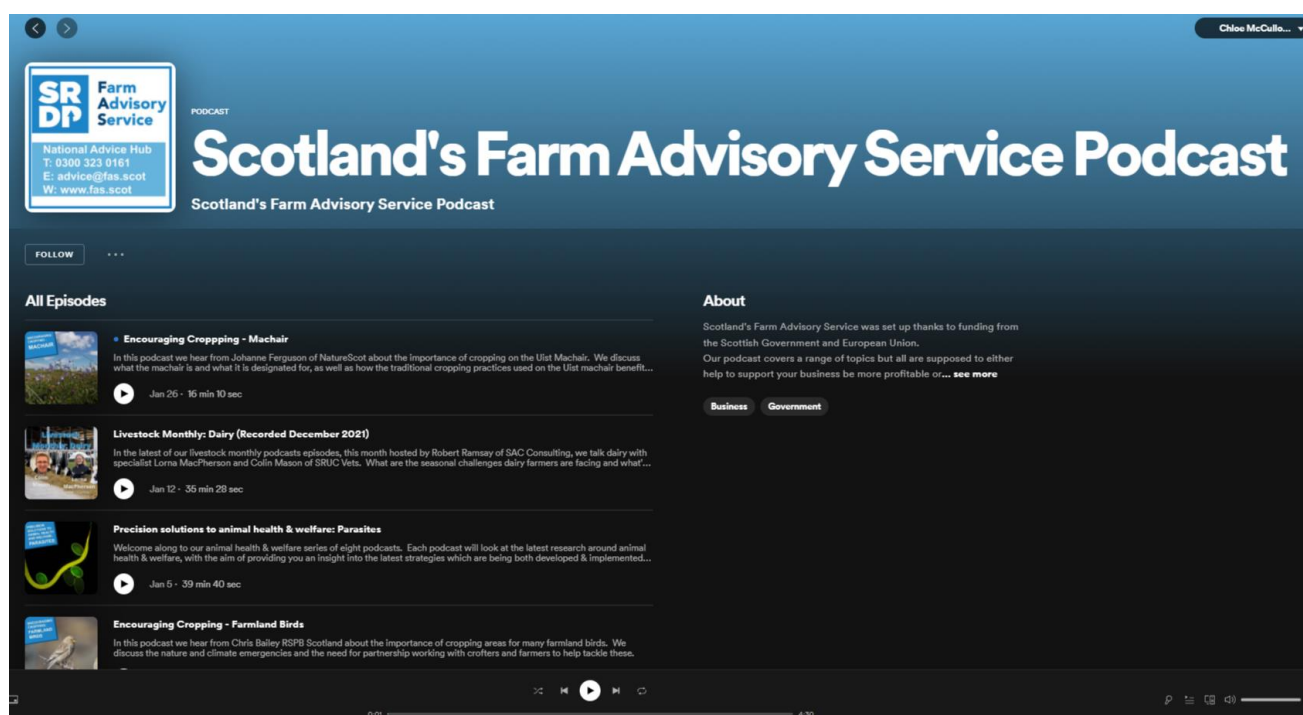


Figure 5 – Podcasts are an increasingly popular output.

During 2021, 8 online tools were produced. These tools covered such subjects as liver fluke, farm safety, antibiotic use, and a wide range of tools for common grazings groups. Also launched during the year was the FAS Companion app. Building on the foundations of the FAS Soil Nutrient Guide app, this new app represents a very significant increase in functionality and is now relevant for a wider range of farmers and crofters. Over the course of 2021, the new app will be promoted, data on its use examined, and proposals for its further development will be constructed.

9. Website and social media

During 2021, the website enjoyed significant growth in use, with average page views of almost 150,000 during the year (increased from an average of almost 90,000 in the previous 12 months).

During the year work has been ongoing to ensure that any sections of the website that were identified as needing updating or expanding, were addressed. Collectively this work will ensure that

when the programme ends in March 2022 the website can continue to serve as a comprehensive resource for Scottish farmers and crofters.

Measure	2021	2020	% change 2020 versus 2021	19/20	18/19	17/18	16/17
Sessions	475,665	347,157	+37%	166,356	67,899	49,775	19,149
Users					38,587	25,543	9,828
New users					36,714	25,053	9,828
Page views	1,766,090	862,554	+104%	311,742	153,737	133,053	72,818
Average page views per session	3.32	2.50	+33%	1.87	2.26	2.67	3.8

There are several ways that users to website find their way to it, outlined in the table below.

Route to website	Audience (%)	
	2021	2020
Organic search (using a search engine to find us)	206,818 (42%)	138,046 (39.8%)
Social (accessing the FAS website via link from social media)	31,593 (6.4%)	27,835 (8%)
Direct (direct links to access specific pages)	241,576 (49%)	159,899 (46.1%)
Referral (links to FAS from other sites)	9,434 (1.9%)	9,196 (2.6%)
Email (links to FAS embedded within e-newsletter emails)	3,270 (0.7%)	12,181 (3.5%)

10. Social media

Both the Facebook and twitter accounts of the one-to-many service have seen growth in followers – by 44 percent and 20 percent respectively. Beyond that, the picture is more complicated.

Twitter is a useful tool for informing people (particularly other stakeholders) about what FAS is doing – especially on policy relevant issues – but it is less effective in stimulating dialogue or engagement with technical subjects.

Twitter measures	2021	Per month	2020	Per month	2020 versus 2021*	% change 2020 versus 2021*
Followers	2,523	N/A	2,104	N/A	419	19.9%
Tweets	804	67	576	64.0	3	+4.7%
Link clicks	3,275	273	3284	364.9	-92	-25.2%
Retweets	979	82	1,013	112.6	-31	-27.5%
Likes	1,591	133	1,570	174.4	-42	-24.0%
Impressions	1,080,473	90,039	790,247	87,805.2	2,234	2.5%
Engagements	16,171	1,348	16,506	1,834.0	-486	-26.5%

*Comparison of monthly average

Top five tweets	Retweets	Likes	Impressions
FAS TV – general promo	2	9	54,388
FAS TV: EP 9 - promo	4	9	44,111
FAS TV promo	38	42	35,764
FAS TV: EP 20 - promo (pre-live)	2	3	25,132
FAS TV: EP 20 – promo (post-live)	1	1	23,156

Facebook is the most effective social media platform for the one-to-many programme to engage with farmers and crofters. The way in which Facebook operates means that free services such as FAS find it harder to reach users and be visible. This, as well as a desire to boost engagement,

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means that FAS continued to make significant use of paid Facebook advertising in 2021. Although this comes at a cost, when used to promote events it is cheaper than traditional print media.

Facebook measures	2021	Per month	2020	Per month	2020 versus 2021*	% change 2020 versus 2021*
Followers	5,277	n/a	3,654	n/a	+1,623	+44.4%
Posts	711	59	574	63.8	-5	-7.1%
Post likes	7,033	586	5,724	636.0	-50	-7.8%
Post shares	1,463	122	986	109.6	+12	+11.3%
Comments	635	53	665	73.9	-21	-28.4%
Link clicks	12,465	1,039	12,346	1,371.8	-333	-24.3%
Photo views	367	31	452	2,958.0	-2,927	-39.1%
Video views	7,761	647	2,487	50.2	+597	+134.0%
Total reach	1,107,497	92,291	844,608	276.3	+92,015	-1.7%
Total impressions	1,482,725	123,560	1,159,291	93,845.3	+29,715	-4.1%

*comparison of monthly average

Top 5 posts	Reach	Impressions	Likes	Shares	Comments
FAS TV: Ep 12	24,488	40,258	10	11	1
FAS TV: Ep 6	24,046	36,041	44	21	2
COP26 events promo	14,399	32,737	30	32	0
FAS TV: Ep 1	21,773	32,042	61	24	1
FAS TV: Ep 13	23,726	31,513	17	11	4



Figure 6 – FAS TV, a television-quality output providing a ‘farm-visit experience’ has been hugely successful in 2021.

11. Croft and Small Farm Advisory Service

The Croft and Small Farm Advisory Service offers both a subsidised subscription to eligible (typically very small scale) businesses so that they can receive up to two hours of remotely delivered advice from SAC Consulting plus a dedicated magazine, and a subsidised consultancy service that provides up to two hours of face-to-face advice.

Subscriber case study – New Entrant Small Farmers

Small farmers Helena and Nick first took out a Subscription in 2019 and were supported to set up their business, establish a fold of Highland cattle, and investigate the potential for AECS funding for their business. They have also taken up a FAS-funded carbon audit and are active participants in a FAS group, where they are being supported in taking actions to reduce their carbon footprint.

Advice is available on many topics, including: livestock rations, analysis of nutrients in silage, animal health planning; horticultural advice; conservation and environmental advice (e.g., management of muirburn, wildflower areas); organic farming; forestry and woodland design and management; renewable energy; livestock record keeping rules and regulations; prevention of pollution, compaction and nutrient loss; and grassland and crop advice including soil analysis, liming, fertiliser, grassland reseeds, removing rushes and weed control.

Subscriber case study – New Entrant Crofter

Paul is a new entrant Crofter and has a Crofter & Small Farm Subscription. He successfully interviewed for a vacant croft by the Crofting Commission. His advisor has assisted him with the registration of the land and providing information about how to improve the croft following being derelict for many years.

In addition, for crofters, advice is also available on: completion of assignments, decrofting and sublet applications; croft maps for Crofting Commission or SGRPID; advice on the Crofting Register; and advice on available grants.

Subscriber case study – New entrant to crofting

Iain is an enthusiastic new entrant crofter who succeeded to his mother's croft, where he runs a flock of cheviot and cross-bred ewes. With support from his subscription, he has built a livestock polycrub on the croft, and has been given advice about handling systems which is about to implement.

12. Advice Line

The FAS Advice Line offers eligible businesses up to 30 minutes of free advice. This can range from advice about upcoming events to more complex regulatory or technical questions. During 2021, 1,405 enquiries were received. 707 (50 percent) of these were of a more technical nature (referred to as “tier 2”). The graph below shows the total number of enquiries per month and the average percentage of those that were tier 2.

